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Statement submitted by Europe Business Assembly Limited, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

Education and international networks as pillars of Inclusive Social Development

There are no broad recipes to guarantee inclusive social development. Even when sheer economic development is attained, it happens often that no "trickle down" effect occurs, and the beneficiaries of the development are the few and not the majority of the population.

This is mostly true in the Africa region, where our organization is consistently working to promote growth with social inclusion.

Our field experience shows that two main aspects are critical to achieving inspiring results: Education and International Networks.

Education has a multiplier function. It not only gives children knowledge on a variety of subjects but also allows them to learn the basics of social life, from respect for the rule of law to sexuality and conceptive practices. That means that individuals can make better informed decisions, which are the result of a choice, and not a simple compliance with incomprehensible traditions or habits.

It is through education that one can understand the benefits of certain health practices, demographic trends, political participation and economic rationality.

Thus, the value of education resides not primarily in the transference of knowledge, but in the ability to inspire reasoning and to understand "what's going on". It is this valuable aspect of education that could be advanced as one of the main factors to guarantee an inclusive social development.

In the end, this is the purpose of education. To create an inclusive and developed society.

One of the earliest educative systems to have been well described is the Ancient Athene's. This model ends up resulting in a model for life, a weltanschauung. The vision of education embodied in each community corresponds to the vision for the society itself.

The Paideia, immortalized in Werner Jaeger's voluminous book, refers to the formation of the ideal person for the Athenian Polis. Education focuses on the individuals and their development, oriented yet in a sense of creating the example of Aretê, the Kalos Kagathos. Centred on the individual, the certainty is that Paideia's education is teleological, that is, the individual is formed with a goal, to be an archetype citizen, as proclaimed in the Homeric poems. Paideia simultaneously incorporated a theoretical and practical knowledge, which was translated into a series of subjects focused on the personal and social improvement of each one, mixing spiritual and physical values such as bravery, honour and strength to be found in a temperate balance. Curricula included subjects such as rhetoric, grammar, and philosophy, as well as arithmetic and medicine. In addition, the Kalos Kagathos should also cultivate physical virtues, so *should be trained in gymnastics. Finally,* morality and conduct should be consolidated by the study of music and poetry.

There is thus a very complete education of the Athenian citizen, with a view to the expected social role play would be achieved.

In other countries and parts of the world, the same approach, with different designations, can be found.

The notion is always that, through education, a coherent and inclusive society can be designed.

Renaissance man, the "uomo universale" is defined by the contemporary Alberti as "a uomo può fare tutte le cose, vuole". This statement sums up the fundamental idea of Renaissance humanism — that humans are unlimited in their capacity for development. Thus, the individual should achieve all the knowledge and develop their capabilities as much as possible. The Renaissance man is one who develops his skills in all areas of achievement: intellectual, artistic, social and physical.

These are two examples of educational models that, although imperfectly and with limitations, tried to create humanistic societies, at least for those who were included in their midst.

The point is that education creates a framework for inclusion in society. Of course, we cannot be anachronistic. The models of Athens and Renaissance were not completely inclusive, as we define it today: women, slaves and strangers were wrongly excluded. The argument is that they tried through a focus in education to achieve what was seen at time as inclusiveness.

The lack of education tends to project brutal and nasty societies, the emergence of education creates more perfect societies, even if with errors.

Generally, it is expected that the educated individual is more exigent towards the political and economic power in what concerns the social evolution of a country, and is armed with better aptitudes to benefit from economic growth. Those are two faces of the same coin. To demand and to learn to benefit from development.

Those were the basic reasons that led our organization to focus on education as a way to achieve truly inclusive social development.

Therefore, we created an international academic association of over 200 University Chancellors, Scientists and Researchers that aims for Excellence, Innovation and Accessibility, and is committed to disseminating these core values through its worldwide community. Leaders of higher education, institutions, colleges, researchers, scientists, teachers, and representatives of higher education are the fundamental agents of change for a more inclusive society.

The network further delves in the second aspect that contributes to an inclusive social development: the creation of international networks. The free exchange of ideas and practices is paramount to the establishment of an innovative environment that allows or tends to allow everyone to participate in development. The more connections, the greater progress and inclusion.

In sum, our proposition is that the best mechanism to achieve Inclusive Social Growth is to exploit the benefits of global education and international networks that enhance the possibilities of knowledge and innovation.